

DIAMOND BAR TOWN CENTER



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Shape the future of the built environment for transformative impact in communities worldwide.

About ULI Technical Assistance Panels

In keeping with the Urban Land Institute mission, Technical Assistance Panels are convened to provide pro-bono planning and development assistance to public officials and local stakeholders of communities and nonprofit organizations who have requested assistance in addressing their land use challenges.

A group of diverse professionals representing the full spectrum of land use and real estate disciplines typically spend one day visiting and analyzing the built environments, identifying specific planning and development issues, and formulating realistic and actionable recommendations to move initiatives forward in a fashion consistent with the applicant's goals and objectives.

TAP Sponsor

City of Diamond Bar

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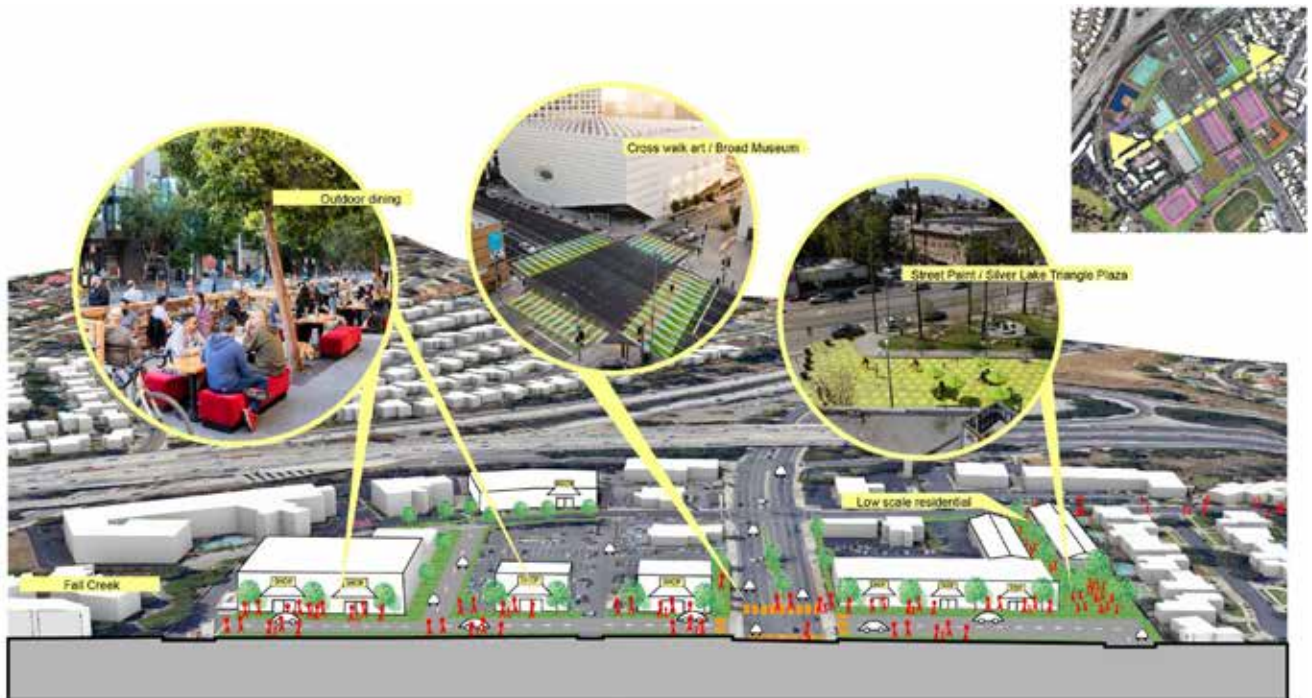
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Assignment

With its origin as a center for ranching perched among a landscape of rolling hills in the East San Gabriel Valley, Diamond Bar is a city at literal and figurative crossroads.

The experience of the city is dominated by suburban design, with a massive highway intersection, where State Routes 57 and 60 meet, dominating the landscape and centering on the use of automobiles for moving around the city and connecting to other parts of the region.

The community of Diamond Bar is much more diverse than its current development patterns might suggest. With a diverse population and relatively high levels of income and affluence, Diamond Bar is presented with a generational opportunity to transform parts of the city to match the desires of current and future residents in ways would be the envy of many other cities in the region.

To that end, the city of Diamond Bar adopted a comprehensive update to its General Plan in December 2019, establishing a new vision for a pedestrian-oriented "Town Center," where residents can enjoy activated spaces, urban housing opportunities, food-oriented retail, restaurants, and entertainment. The development would reflect a new approach to development in suburban communities like Diamond Bar, but one that is necessary to attract a mixed-income, multi-generation community that offers chances to work and play, while also ensuring relatively affordable housing for young people and future generations of Diamond Bar residents.

The new General Plan designates a 45-acre commercial area along Diamond Bar's main thoroughfare—Diamond Bar Boulevard between Golden Springs Drive and the SR-60 overpass—as the Town Center Mixed Use Focus Area. The Focus Area is currently developed with automobile-oriented commercial uses, small office buildings, a motel, and four gas stations. The land use mix and redevelopment potential of the area is further complicated by fragmentation—the Focus Area comprises 24 lots with 23 different owners, each with varying long-term lease agreements.

With this vision, and its challenges in mind, the city of Diamond Bar sought out the Urban Land Institute-Los Angeles (ULI-LA) to undertake a technical assistance panel (TAP) to gain a better understanding of the market possibilities, implementation strategies, and design frameworks to consider as it plans the Diamond Bar Town Center.

The vision presented here will face numerous pressures and constraints, like worsening traffic, reduced housing affordability, and the loss of open space, but the benefit will be huge. A new, redeveloped Diamond Bar Town Center has the potential for a transformative effect for the entire city, celebrating Diamond Bar's demographic diversity, active lifestyles, love of food, and hillside vistas.



Key Questions

The city of Diamond Bar requested that the ULI TAP panel review and make recommendations in answer to the following questions:

Urban Form/Placemaking

- How can the city of Diamond Bar transform suburban style neighborhood commercial centers into a vibrant, pedestrian-oriented Town Center?
- What are some design options for the study area that can advance the overall vision for the Town Center?

Market Feasibility

- What appropriate mix of uses, and at what densities, is needed to create a Town Center environment and sense of place?
- Is there market demand for such a mix of uses?
- How can the city challenge market forces that seem to maintain the status quo?

Financial Feasibility

- What is needed to ensure an overall positive net fiscal impact to the city?
- How can the city entice property owners to make the needed investment to create a new Town Center?

Implementation

- What are some key next steps and implementation tools available to the city to help facilitate the creation of a Town Center?
- What are some key next steps that property owners can take to help make the vision become a reality?
- What are some strategies and incentives to encourage property owner partnerships and participation?



Major Conclusions

Using the designated Diamond Bar Town Center Mixed Use Focus Area as the TAP's study area, the TAP offers planning, land use, finance, and design recommendations to be implemented collaboratively and over time. The recommendations are intended to guide the development of an accessible, pedestrian-oriented community destination that balances the needs of existing and future uses and celebrates Diamond Bar's diversity and vibrancy.

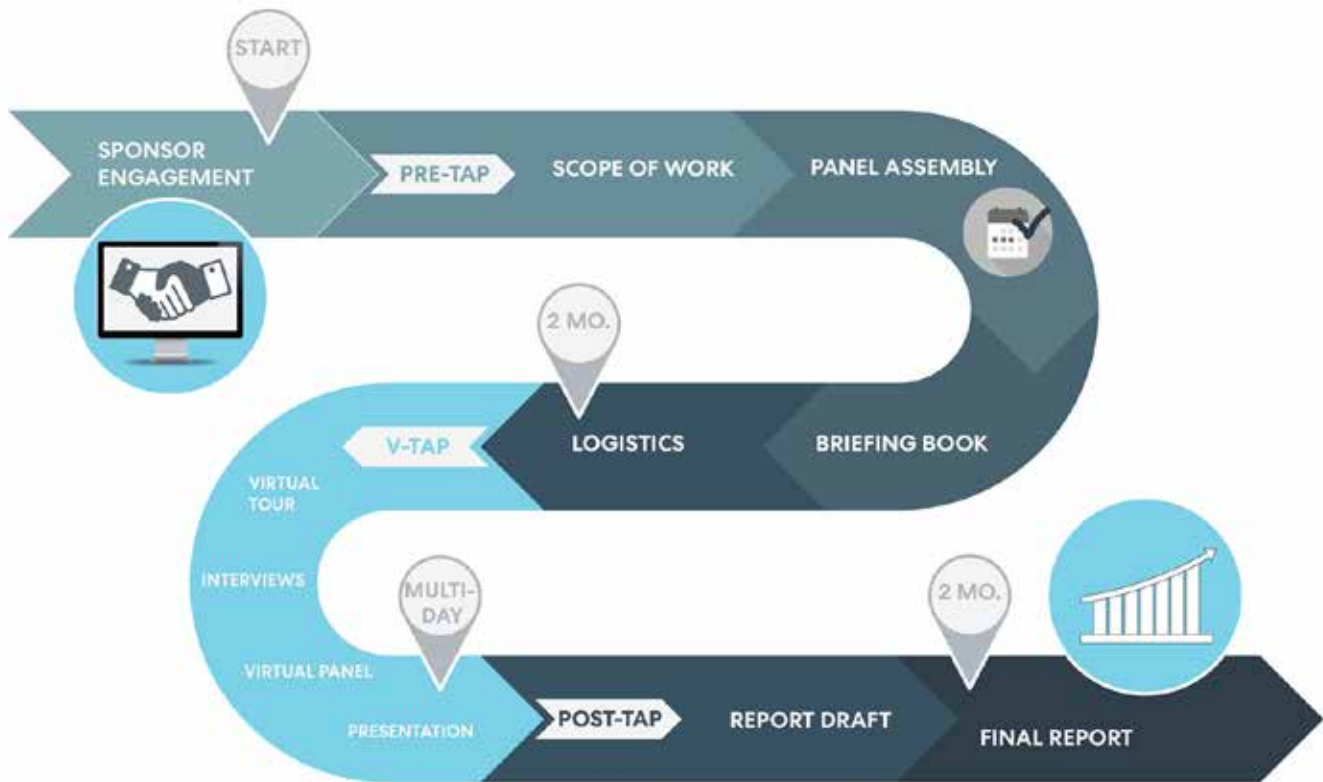
The TAP's vision for the Diamond Bar Town Center includes higher residential densities than currently allowed in the Vision 2040 General Plan. These higher residential densities would provide the benefit of creating new housing options affordable at a mix of income levels. The resulting residential population would also drive demand for new restaurants, retail, walkability, and open and gathering spaces in the Town Center.

Achieving the appropriate balance of use and development density will require a Specific Plan that provides both the certainty to incentivize investment and the flexibility to ensure the financial feasibility of future development. The TAP recommends that the city use an urban framework to guide the cohesive redevelopment of the Town Center, with urban-sized blocks, residential density, and a priority on pedestrian movement in and around the Focus Area.

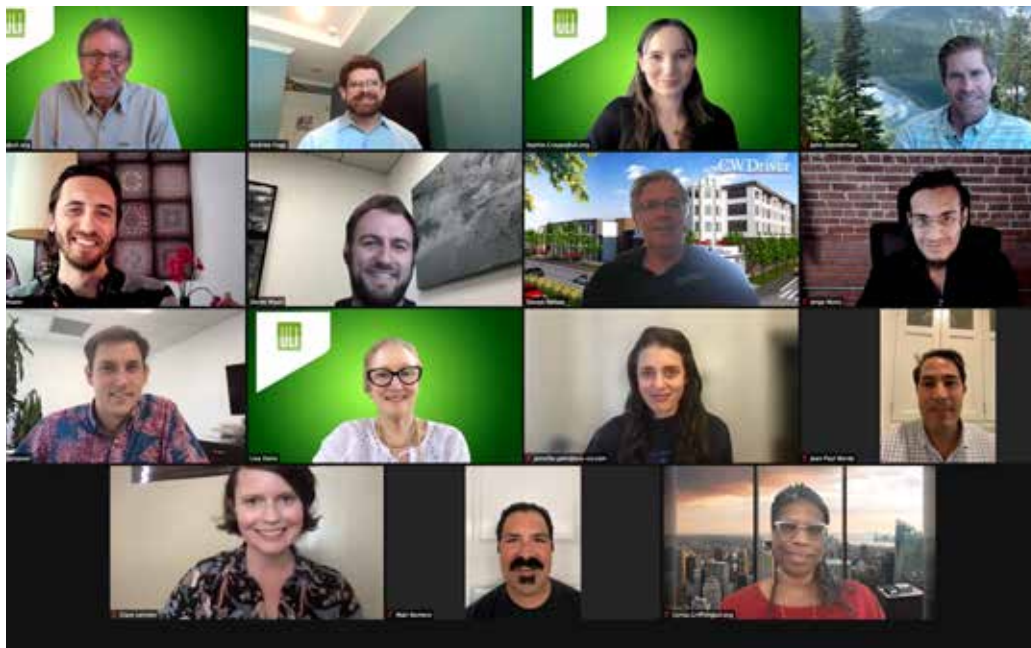
Deliberate design choices can take advantage of the natural topography of the site while also optimizing the location of parking and creating the space for a pedestrian-only plaza and paseo at the southern end of the Focus Area. With dramatic vistas to the San Gabriel Mountains to the north, these pedestrian spaces would be lined by creative and authentic retail and food uses—the kinds of uses that activate the atmosphere of a village, with people shopping, eating, and celebrating.

Above all, the TAP's recommendations reflect the community's vision for a new Diamond Bar Town Center, connecting this new approach to suburban redevelopment to Diamond Bar's rural beginnings, the surrounding natural landscapes, and to each other—the interpersonal connections that tie the diverse city together and foster a sustainable future for generations to come.





Process diagram for the virtual TAP



Given the public health constraints of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Diamond Bar Town Center TAP was conducted online with the assistance of Zoom

ULI'S TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PANELS

TAP Process

Prior to the Technical Assistance Panel (TAP), ULI panel members met with representatives from the City of Diamond Bar to determine the scope of the panel assignment. ULI selected panel members with professional expertise that address the stated objectives for the TAP. To prepare for the TAP, panel members reviewed background materials, including the Vision 2040 General Plan, housing market data, demographics, and other information.

Given the public health constraints of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Diamond Bar TAP was conducted online with the assistance of Zoom for meetings, Google Drive for collaboration, and Google Earth and other technology for virtual tours of the site. The typical duration of a TAP—two days—was also extended to a full week to accommodate the physically distanced nature of the exercise.

On the first day of the TAP, panel members participated in a virtual tour of the study area with Diamond Bar city staff. On day two, the TAP conducted interviews with city officials, property owners, community members, and other interested stakeholders. On day three, the panelists conducted an intensive analysis of the site and the surrounding area that continued through day four. The TAP panel presented their findings during a final Zoom meeting to a special joint session of the Diamond Bar City Council and Planning Commission attended by city staff, and members of the community on day five of the TAP.

The Experts of the Technical Assistance Panel

ULI convened a panel of professionals representing a variety of disciplines connected to land use and real estate development, architecture, urban design, city planning, economic analysis, and development financing. Collectively, the ULI panel members represented a significant gathering of professional expertise relevant to Diamond Bar's objectives for the study and a working knowledge of the real estate market, design typologies, and public policy tools at work in the city and region. All panel members volunteered to participate in the panel process and did not receive compensation for their work.

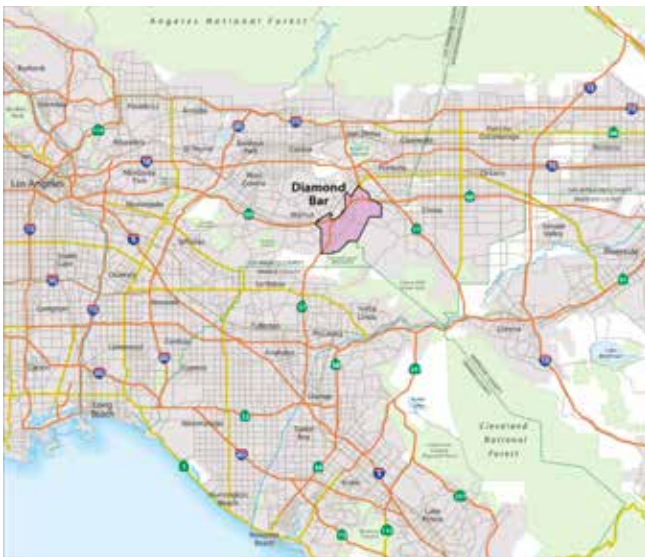


The TAP Panel along with sponsor & stakeholders participate in the presentation sharing the panel's findings

DIAMOND BAR MIXED-USE TOWN CENTER: CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

Regional and Community Context

Located on the eastern edge of Los Angeles County in the San Gabriel Valley, within minutes of Orange, Riverside, and San Bernardino counties, the area now known as the city of Diamond Bar began as Rancho Los Nogales—Ranch of the Walnut Trees—in 1840. Fragmented and reassembled as Diamond Bar Ranch in 1918, the ranch continued to function primarily for agriculture until 1956, when it was purchased and became one of Los Angeles County's first master planned communities. In 1989, the suburban residential community of Diamond Bar became Los Angeles County's 86th city.



Bounded by the cities of Industry and Pomona to the north, Pomona and Chino Hills to the east, Brea to the south, and unincorporated Los Angeles County to the west, Diamond Bar today covers 14.9 square miles and is home to a population of 57,177. With an increasingly diverse demographic that's 54.6% Asian, 19.6% white, 18.4% Hispanic or Latino, 3.8% Black, and 3.6% other ethnicities and indigenous Americans, Diamond Bar's ethnic diversity is an attribute that will shape present and future commercial and residential preferences.

In the past 15 years, Diamond Bar has been recognized by CNN Money Magazine's list of "Top 100 Best Places to Live," Family Circle Magazine's list of "10 Best Towns for Families," and, in 2009, Business Week Magazine's top three of "50 Best Places to Raise your Kids." Diamond Bar takes pride in its quality schools, low crime rates, cultural diversity, strong community spirit, parks and open space, and the strong fiscal health of the city. Diamond Bar's marquee business hub is the Gateway Corporate Center, located near the intersection of state routes 57 and 60 and home to the South Coast AQMD, City Hall, and several Fortune 500 companies, supplying a high concentration of well-paying jobs and a large daytime workforce population. Diamond Bar is largely automobile-oriented, with residents relying on cars to access food, work, school, and services, as well as for travel outside the city for entertainment and work.

While Diamond Bar residents enjoy higher-than-average disposable incomes, the city loses significant retail expenditure to neighboring areas in the region due to the newer, large format retailers located in nearby cities, like Brea Downtown, The Shoppes at Chino Hills, and Claremont Village. Through future mixed-use development, Diamond Bar hopes to capture some of the tax revenue lost to surrounding cities.

The city of Diamond Bar sits at the crossroads of two of the most heavily traveled and crucial state highways in the nation. Both SR-57 and SR-60 are major travel routes critical to Southern California's regional traffic flow, serving as important links in the movement of goods from coastal ports to inland counties and other states. SR-57 is one of few north-south freeways in the region, serving as a key link between Orange County and East Los Angeles County. SR-60 is an essential east-west corridor connecting employees and freight between Los Angeles County and the most populous parts of the Inland Empire. Trucks use SR-60 to move 43% of freight goods that pass in and out of the Greater Los Angeles Basin. Approximately 350,000 vehicles traverse the 57-60 intersection during a typical weekday.

The Diamond Bar Mixed-Use Town Center Focus Area is also adjacent to that two-mile stretch of on-ramps, off-ramps, flyovers, and merging cars and trucks. An eastbound offramp delivers motorists from both freeways directly onto Diamond Bar Boulevard at the northern boundary of the Focus Area. Westbound SR-60 on- and off-ramps also connect to Diamond Bar Boulevard, approximately 900 feet to the north of the Focus Area. The 57-60 intersection is currently undergoing phased improvements, including ramp and interchange reconfigurations and the addition of auxiliary collector, distributor, and bypass lanes. The changes are intended to significantly reduce congestion and collisions while also preventing overflow traffic onto the surface streets of Diamond Bar. The city hopes that the ongoing and planned capital projects for the



interchange and the General Plan's new Complete Streets element will alleviate some of the area's hostile traffic conditions and foster healthier and more active mobility choices to access the Town Center.

The collection of suburban residential communities that make up the bulk of Diamond Bar has traditionally tended toward distinct, insulated single-family neighborhoods, with minimal connections to other residential neighborhoods or to the city's pockets of commercial activity. While Diamond Bar has numerous centers of activity, including the Diamond Bar Center, the City Hall and Library complex, high schools, and various suburban style commercial centers, the city lacks a clear community focal point—the traditional role of a vibrant, walkable downtown.

The Diamond Bar Mixed-Use Town Center Focus Area proposes the collection of parcels along Diamond Bar Boulevard, between SR-60 and Golden Springs Drive, as a chance to build a new center of activity for residents of Diamond Bar, providing entertainment and retail options and community gathering spaces in a pleasant, walkable environment.

Recent Planning & Development

The Diamond Bar City Council adopted a comprehensive update to the city's General Plan ("Vision 2040"), in December 2019, following a three-year process of public outreach, engagement, and participation. Vision 2040 will guide land use and development decisions in the city over the next 20-plus years, serving also as an expression of the collective hopes and aspirations of the Diamond Bar community.

Throughout the plan update process, Diamond Bar residents expressed a desire for more local access to dining, entertainment, and retail establishments. As a result, the Vision 2040 General Plan identifies four focus areas for major land use changes to create walkable, mixed-use activity centers. These focus areas provide opportunities for infill development that can incorporate a range of housing, employment, and recreational uses to meet the needs of families, young people, senior citizens, and residents of all incomes. New land use designations are proposed for each of these focus areas to facilitate their development.



The Town Center Mixed-Use Focus Area, the study area for this TAP report, currently comprises 24 separate lots, owned by 23 separate persons or entities. Encouraged by the goals and policies set forth in the General Plan for the Town Center, two owners of parcels at the southern end of the Focus Area have approached the city to express interest in redeveloping their properties. However, these property owners are working independently, and neither has presented a concept that reflects the city's vision for the Town Center.

Another component of the Vision 2040 General Plan salient to this study is its commitment to "Complete Streets" as a framework for evaluating future changes to transportation infrastructure. Complete Streets policies require that future roadway improvements provide a balanced, multi-modal transportation network that meets the needs of all users of streets, roads, and highways—not just drivers of automobiles and trucks, but pedestrians, people on bikes, transit users, young people, elders, families, and people with disabilities.

LAND USE, DESIGN, AND PROGRAMMING RECOMMENDATIONS

There are a limited number of housing options in Diamond Bar—most of the housing is spread among single-family detached homes. Like in the rest of the Southern California region, the cost of housing in Diamond Bar is increasingly out of the range for both current residents and their children. The Town Center provides a clear opportunity to diversify the city's housing stock and accommodate more residential population at a range of income levels. More density and more diversity of household types—multi-generational and mixed income, for example—would drive demand for the additional amenities, retail, services, and programming elements planned for the Town Center. All over the country and world, successful town centers are surrounded by, and integrated with, denser residential densities. That new development density of the Town Center does not have to be a detriment the character and density of the surrounding neighborhoods.

In fact, many in the surrounding neighborhoods stand to immediately benefit from the development density of a new Town Center. In addition to its social benefits, a larger residential development and more retail and commercial uses would produce positive fiscal and economic impacts for the city, creating more jobs (construction and ongoing employment), offering more housing options for the community, and generating more revenue for the city.

The TAP chose to organize this new density of mixed-use development into an urban framework that considers the existing property owners, lot boundaries, lease terms, topography, pedestrian walking distances, and market feasibilities of a large-scale redevelopment program. This urban framework would provide flexible guidance for a phased redevelopment of the Focus Area, starting at the southern edge with the properties along Golden Springs Drive and the west side of Diamond Bar Boulevard.



Phase I Development

The existing momentum for the Town Center concept can be leveraged at the two properties located on Golden Springs Drive at the southern end of the Focus Area. The owners of these properties are ready and willing to make the investment in their properties and have expressed support for the Town Center vision described in the Vision 2040 General Plan.

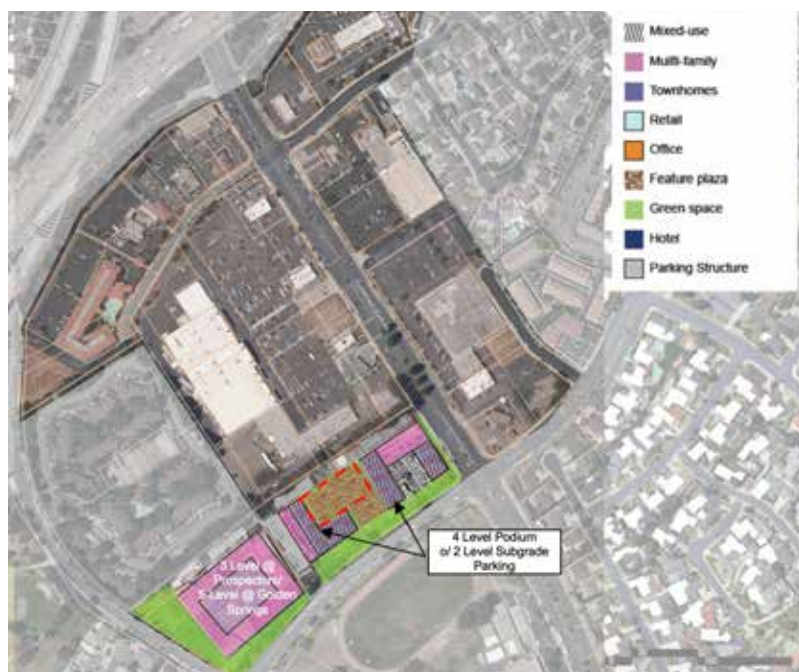
The TAP recommends that the first phase of redevelopment for the Town Center prioritize the pedestrian experience by orienting development around a central paseo—a pedestrian-only walkway with active street frontages and enhanced public space for programming, community gathering, and pedestrian circulation. Similar to a town square with community-serving retail, the paseo would serve as a community destination and focal point, accentuated with expansive views of the San Gabriel Mountains to the north.

A diagram created by the TAP shows the plaza surrounded by community-serving food and retail uses. A precedent for this kind of plaza and retail mix is Piazza Vecchia in Bergamo, Italy— Piazza Vecchia also sits on a hill, like the parcel in Diamond Bar. Like in Bergamo, the new plaza

could have a variety of programming, outdoor festivals to match the season, and retail and restaurants, with authentic food to serve the diverse ethnicities of the city, lining the plaza. Finally, multi-family residential units would be located on the floors above the plaza. The mix of all these elements and the dynamic created by densities of population and attractions would create a civic space.

The eastern parcel of the Phase I Town Center development site would allow for the creation of a new parking garage. The grade change on these parcels allows for parking to be built into the slope, for a subgrade parking garage located below Diamond Bar Boulevard, the proposed plaza, and the new retail uses on the ground floor of the Phase 1 redevelopment.

The other parcel in Phase 1, located to the west along Prospectors Road, is large enough to accommodate a "wrapped product"—a new housing development "wrapped" around an interior parking garage. The TAP identifies this parcel as providing enough space here to also include new green space connecting into the large network of green space in the city of Diamond Bar.



The Complete Diamond Bar Town Center

Beyond Phase I, there is no ideal path for the phased completion of the redevelopment vision. Because of the multitude of property owners and property lines, a phased approach will require a degree of flexibility to respond to changing market conditions and the unique challenges of each parcel while also maintaining greater Town Center vision. To be clear: the full realization of the Town Center redevelopment will require ownership changes and long-term negotiations that could take many years or even decades to play out.

When and where development does proceed, parcels to the north should be plugged into the plaza completed in Phase 1. The grade of the Focus Area creates an opportunity to provide a feature like the Spanish Steps in Rome or Paseo Colorado in Pasadena. The paseo would be lined with retail on the ground floor and residential units on the floors above. This part of the redevelopment could also include a five-level parking structure at the center of another wrapped residential product. Another parking garage would serve the retail while also providing more space for retail, as shown in the plan view created by the TAP.



Continuing the move north, toward the freeway, the new Sprouts grocery store would remain a good fit for the Town Center vision. Diamond Bar residents want healthy food options—a neighborhood-serving grocery store should remain at the same location in the future. Here, the public realm transitions away from a pedestrian-only environment into a multi-modal environment. Visitors arriving by car can park and access parking structures, while also still finding space for parking directly in front of the grocery store.

Finally, the parcels that abut the freeway provide an opportunity for healthy lifestyle uses—like a Parks and Recreation Department facility or a private use like a gym or other active recreation business. A use here to encourage healthy living and outdoor living would serve a demand in the city for more healthy lifestyle options. These uses would also provide a culmination of the Town Center experience, when traversed on foot from the south to the north end of the Focus Area.

The existing motel property located in the northwest corner could be redeveloped into a higher density full-service or boutique hotel. The TAP also identified space nearby for a three-story townhome development that bridges a gap between the hotel and existing condo development to the south.

At the eastern edge of the Town Center (on the eastern side of Diamond Bar Boulevard), neighborhood retail, a park and civic center, and middle density housing could be added. The three-story townhomes suggested here would bridge the gap between the higher density multi-family proposed to the south and the surrounding single-family residential neighborhoods. Just south on the eastern side of Diamond Bar Boulevard, the TAP envisions another wrapped mixed-use product. This project would vary the massing of the building, stepping down from five levels along Diamond Bar Boulevard, which is a much more urban corridor, to three levels on the side of the parcel adjacent to the single-family neighborhood.

Another podium residential product could be located in the southeast corner of the study area, at Golden Springs Drive and Diamond Bar Boulevard. This parcel would also be an opportunity to potentially add an office building with retail along Diamond Bar Boulevard—this development opportunity is shown in orange on the plan view created by the TAP.

To illustrate some of the aspirational qualities of the places proposed by this report, the TAP also prepared cross sections for the two main topographical features of the study area.

Section north-south



A north-south section view of the Town Center shows the relatively dramatic drop in elevation from the southern end of the Focus Area. There will be numerous programmatic options for the steps between the first two parcels in the southwest corner of the study area—similar to the regional example of the Culver

Steps at Ivy Station on the Metro E Line in Culver City, which has a very dynamic outdoor space that functions as a gathering area but also as a very active performance space, so it's programmed in a variety of ways. Retail components would bookend the paseo, and, heading north and downhill, vehicular access would eventually cut east-west across the Town Center. The density of the development also decreases farther down the hill.

The TAP created a second, east-west section through the middle of the site, perpendicular to Diamond Bar Boulevard. New pedestrian connections can be created along this axis, connecting the paseo and the grocery store to new and existing retail and residential components on the east side of Diamond Bar Boulevard. Additionally, these east-west paths would bridge the two strong, but previously disconnected, residential components on either side of the Focus Area. These east-west paths and streets should be very accommodating to the human scale (as opposed to a car-centric street configuration), providing a new level of safety and access to retail and entertainment uses in the Town Center. The TAP considered the feasibility of adding a pedestrian bridge crossing Diamond Bar Boulevard to provide additional connectivity; however, given the large span of the public right of way and the proposed orientation of uses, the TAP concluded that an enhanced crosswalk near the midpoint of the Focus Area would likely provide a more feasible pedestrian access point.

The residents and stakeholders of Diamond Bar desire what amounts to a new "Main Street"—as evidenced by the priorities and visions established by the Vision 2040 General Plan. The opportunity here is for a pedestrian Main Street. The opportunity is spectacular. Because of how the slope of the Focus Area perfectly aligns with views of the San Gabriel Mountains, there are perfect vantage points throughout the entire north-south axis of the Focus Area along the paseo. That view can be extended to rooftop amenities, especially food and beverage, on some of the buildings developed in the new Town Center.

Pedestrian and Vehicular Circulation

The pedestrian circulation is a critical component of the TAP's recommendations, key to creating connections through the Town Center and into surrounding neighborhoods. Once people arrive, the Town Center should provide a very walkable, pleasant environment. An ideal pedestrian walking distance is about five minutes in an urban setting—to keep people's attention and convince them to get out of their cars and walk between points of interest.

The Complete Streets plan for Diamond Bar Boulevard is a critical tool for ensuring the walkability of the Town Center, because Diamond Bar Boulevard is the first signal to people arriving to Diamond Bar that the Town Center is a safe and comfortable place for pedestrians. The TAP recommends adding more width for sidewalk elements along Diamond Bar Boulevard. The current complete streets concept plans for Class 4 protected bike lanes, but still has six vehicle lanes. It is possible to balance capacity on Diamond Bar Boulevard with safety for cyclists and pedestrians, but additional study and design work will be necessary to achieve that challenging goal.

On the interior of the development, the paseo is the crucial component of the pedestrian experience. The paseo should be a comfortable, open, flexible space, with a variety of experiences that offers a variety of programming opportunities. Both sides of the paseo and the steps can be activated with retail space and outdoor dining spaces. The entire paseo, as envisioned here by the TAP, would be exclusively pedestrian.

The east-west connection through the Town Center would double as a corridor of green spaces, creating a strong pedestrian connection to the east of the paseo, across Diamond Bar Boulevard, and connecting to the existing residential neighborhoods to the east. Improved streetscapes, bike lanes, paving, and other infrastructure will send a strong signal to drivers that the Town Center and surrounding neighborhoods are a pedestrian friendly area.

A new intersection on Diamond Bar Boulevard can be easily enhanced for improved pedestrian safety by increasing the size and visual prominence of the crosswalk. The crosswalk also offers another opportunity to incorporate art. Something as simple as paint can create a lot more attention—for the Town Center and for the pedestrians enjoying the area.

The pedestrian infrastructure of the Town Center can provide additional benefits to the demonstrated health and economic benefits of pedestrian activity—the changes also offer a chance to implement green stormwater

infrastructure and other best practices for habitat protection or urban design and placemaking. Throughout the whole Town Center, the space can be animated and activated by season and occasion. The hanging lights display in Santa Monica at the 3rd Street Promenade is another regional example, but art could also take many shapes and forms throughout the Town Center.

The new, east-west roadways proposed by the TAP for the Town Center should be narrow, with wide pedestrian facilities and traffic calming measures like bulbouts and speed bumps on the street. The TAP hopes to prevent the use of these new streets by cut-through traffic, so calming measures will be essential to maintaining the right priority on the pedestrian experience along these streets.

In an urban grid, pedestrians take priority. The vehicle access plotted by the TAP will deliver drivers to the parking structures, minimizing wherever possible the conflicts and risks of vehicle ingress and egress through pedestrian corridors. Once parked, visitors should prefer to walk through the site.

Pedestrian Circulation



Parking

Large surface parking lots currently dominate the Focus Area—with 2,086 parking spaces that inhibit pedestrian-scaled and active street frontages—two of the goals expressed for a new Town Center by the Vision 2040 General Plan. Parking is now and will continue to be an "elephant in the room" for the Focus Area. The TAP considered the issues of how to mitigate the costs of providing new parking while accommodating the parking needs of new and existing commercial uses with evolving demands as an essential challenge for the success of the Town Center. Parking will also be essential to an increased residential population. Because of its cost, parking will determine the financial viability of the entire redevelopment project.

To achieve the ambitions for the Town Center expressed in the Vision 2040 plan, the Town Center will have to transition away from the current dominance of surface parking. Parking structures should be located to provide site visibility and mitigate the poor aesthetic qualities of typical parking structures and the safety risks of the vehicular access to these structures. The TAP identified numerous options for integrating structured and consolidated parking throughout the new residential and retail developments proposed in this Town Center concept.

One of the options for structured parking, mentioned above, would take advantage of the Focus Area's sloped topography to support a variety of parking structures. Subterranean parking is the most expensive type of parking. However, this parking structure would reduce some of the expected costs by working with the slope on the parcel. Subterranean parking also offers the potential for additional building height dedicated to residential and retail uses. A wrapped housing project, with the parking

structure in the middle of the building, would also be an option for addressing the concerns surrounding parking structures. A wrapped housing structure would save on more of the costs associated with subterranean parking.

Some of the existing surface parking, located farther downhill and north through the Focus Area, could be maintained, with the addition of programming and opportunities for interim and flexible uses (more on those opportunities below). Still, the preference throughout the Town Center should be for wrapped, podium, or subterranean parking structures to open space for new uses, programming, and pedestrian-oriented activity.

Another important idea for addressing parking now and in the future is shared parking—managing existing parking and the growing need for parking in the future by sharing parking between daytime and nighttime users as well as weekday and weeknight users.

With the ongoing uncertainty about the scalability and long-term viability of autonomous vehicles and ride-hailing companies, the parking needs of the future present a complicated, significant contingency. Paid parking will also be a necessity at some point in the future—even if the market wouldn't support paid parking now, it might in the future. Flexibility in the development of parking could respond to the changes in parking demand over time, potentially transitioning to other uses if parking demand lessens over time.

The big, difficult question remains of how much parking to require for both commercial and residential developments to support all of the uses in the Town Center. As this report will detail in the Market Assessment section below, the TAP recommends lowering parking requirements for the residential uses and adjusting residential density limitations to enable more residential development. The TAP expects that these changes will better match the financial realities and the market potential with the zoned

Vehicular Circulation



capacity on the site, but the city should undertake a much more detailed financial analysis of the zoned capacity and parking requirements to provide the flexibility and support that will ensure the success of the Town Center.

Comparative Site Analysis

The TAP identified a number of similar development and redevelopment projects to demonstrate the possibilities for a vibrant, walkable community Town Center with building typologies that allow residents to enjoy, rather than obstructing, views of the surrounding landscape.

Other sites around the United States of similar size have achieved similar goals to those established by the city for the new Town Center. The current site also provides a baseline for comparison. These examples include:

- **The Village at Totem Lake** in Kirkland, Washington: 26 acres, 850 residential units, 400,000 square feet of retail, and 30,000 square feet of office space.
- **Santana Row** in San Jose, California: 42 acres, 1,200 units, 680,000 square feet of retail, and two hotels. Developed with a main street orientation surrounded by a grid of blocks.
- **Santa Clara Square** in Santa Clara, California: 92 acres, 1,300 units, 120,000 square feet of retail, and 1.2 million square feet of office. Includes neighborhood-focused retail and an intimate main street with double-side retail and higher density residential.

Scale Comparison | The Village at Totem Lake, Kirkland, WA



All the scale comparisons cited by the TAP exemplify an urban grid that allows future and phased development. The comparison sites provide useful guidance on scale of intensity of development, combinations of uses, and how the public and private realm can be enhanced to support and activate the long term development of the site.

Scale Comparison | Santana Row, San Jose, CA



Scale Comparison | Santa Clara Square, Santa Clara, CA



IMPLEMENTATION

Market Assessment

The predominantly large-scale, low-density residential neighborhoods surrounding the site necessitate that the Town Center accommodate new forms of housing. The state's Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) also requires the city to plan opportunities for new, mixed-income housing developments.

With a mixed-use vision for the Town Center in mind, and hoping to maximize revenue capture from commercial uses, the Vision 2040 General Plan's zoning designations for the Focus area include C-1, C-2, and C-3 zones and establishes a floor-to-area ratio (FAR) of 1.5 with maximum residential density at 20 units per acre. These zoning constraints limit the area's density to 900 residential units while providing an abundance—1.8 million square feet—of commercial space.

However, the TAP anticipates insufficient demand to support such a scale and intensity of use for the Town Center. With parking requirements for commercial uses exceeding those of residential, it would cost an estimated \$135 million to construct the approximately 6,800 parking spaces required for the commercial uses at 1.5 FAR. The costs of new parking could be shared between the city and developers, but with the price tag for parking at \$20,000 per space and density limits on residential use, the city is unlikely to find developers who can deliver Diamond Bar's vision for the Town Center.

The TAP therefore recommends that the city consider market alternatives in a future Specific Plan process by increasing residential density limits to 1,500 units and requiring significantly less parking. That density would be accommodated in housing typologies that reach between

three and seven stories, in a combination of town homes, wrapped products (with housing units wrapped around a central parking garage), and podium products (a housing development built on a top of a parking garage). The TAP also notes that it may not be possible to achieve development at the full floor area ratio (FAR) of 1.5 contemplated in the General Plan and that an FAR of closer to 1.25 may be more realistic for the site. However, the TAP recommends maintaining the 1.5 FAR limitation to provide additional flexibility if such additional development becomes feasible under future market conditions.

The TAP calculated that the city would, for example, realize a positive fiscal impact of up to \$1.7 million annually in increased property and sales tax revenues by reconfiguring the Town Center to target a more moderate 650,000 square feet of commercial space and allowing 600 more housing units. The additional residential units would also drive demand for additional Town Center amenities, retail services, and programming elements that could be developed in the near term. New levels of residential density in subsequent phases of development would continue to unlock new levels of market, financial, and fiscal feasibility.

The TAP's speculative pro forma is intended to illustrate the new levels of financial, economic, and fiscal viability made possible with a different approach to zoning and land use regulations, including parking requirements, for the Town Center redevelopment. This analysis, however, is preliminary. The TAP recommends the city conduct further market analysis to determine true housing demand in the area and to consider modifying or eliminating residential density limits accordingly.

Specific Plan Development

The TAP echoes the local support for the creation of a new Specific Plan to guide the development of the Diamond Bar Town Center. The TAP also offers the following recommendations for developing that plan.

The Specific Plan process might take two to five years to complete, but the entire redevelopment cycle could take 30 years or more for full implementation as parcel ownership changes or lease terms expire. A new Specific Plan should provide the flexibility to address changes that might occur over that timeframe while still holding true to the essential vision of a walkable, mixed-use Town Center. This flexibility will require that the city avoid creating an overly prescriptive Specific Plan. These kinds of plans tend to fall short of the intended outcome by requiring numerous, frustrating, and regular amendments. In Diamond Bar, code amendments require full City Council approval, so the Specific Plan should avoid as much as possible the need to go to the full council for permission to make small tweaks or add desirable options that don't fit the parameters of the Specific Plan. This TAP proposes many uses and potential tenants, but market factors could change the desirability of these uses ten or 20 years from now. Today's market conditions won't necessarily be tomorrow's market conditions.

The TAP also recommends using development agreements—already allowed in Diamond Bar with approval by council—within the context of the Specific Plan. Finally, the city should consider the preparation of a program Environmental Impact Review (EIR), which would streamline subsequent California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review for individual projects.

Development Incentives and Funding

The challenge for the Diamond Bar Town Center will be to create an urban grid while taking into account the considerations of existing property owners, existing property boundaries, existing lease terms, topography, and ideal pedestrian walking distances.

So how does this to happen? How can the city convince property owners to participate in the elements of the proposed redevelopment plan? There are a lot of tools to incentivize development and redevelopment, but one of the most desirable factors for developers is certainty. There is a lot of risk to a lengthy entitlement process, and anything that mitigates that risk will give developers confidence that a project will move forward efficiently. That mitigation of risk can be achieved with a program EIR, as mentioned above, and by working collaboratively with property owners throughout the development of a Specific Plan, also mentioned above. Collaboration can help the city determine whether the terms of the Specific Plan are clear and the infrastructure and amenities that the plan asks developers to build are financially feasible.



Another step toward achieving certainty would be to create a streamlined review process to expedite the review of development proposals. That could include the employment of a dedicated city staff member, empowered to ensure cross-department coordination. One recommendation the TAP heard from many of the stakeholders was that it would be very helpful for the city to demonstrate a willingness to work across silos of bureaucracy. Through this staff position, the city can also maintain a commitment to the project requirements, avoiding changes to the vision for infrastructure and amenities over time.

The right kind of development incentives could also ensure that developments are active partners in the improvement of the Town Center. Public financing options to help deliver the vision of the community include:

- **Business Improvements Districts:** Public-private partnerships that result in a special assessment that can be used for parking facilities and other public infrastructure.
- **Community Facilities Districts (CFD):** A special tax levied on both residential and the commercial (e.g., retail and office) uses. The special taxes can generate bond proceeds of up to \$40 to \$60 million.
- **Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District (EIFD):** The response to the demise of redevelopment agencies in the state of California, EIFDs are new form of tax increment financing. An EIFD captures increases in assessed value, allowing the city to assess bonds based on that increase.
- **Tax sharing agreement:** Would share some of the tax generated by the project with the developers.

The benefits of the districts listed above is that they don't increase the taxes for the rest of the residents and stakeholders of the city. The BID and CFD are ways for these specific property owners, businesses, and developers to pay their own way and ensure benefits to their investments. For developers, for example, these funding mechanisms offer very low interest rate financing opportunities. For example, bonds earlier this year were issuing 30-year debt at a 3.1 percent interest rate on a tax-exempt basis. These kinds of district funding programs would also accelerate the financial viability of public infrastructure. These bonds can be issued before completion of development and assist with the completion of infrastructure.

From the city's perspective, the developers will contribute funding toward the costs of the project. Each land use would be taxed on a fair share basis, so everyone is participating equally. The new taxes are secured only by the new development—it doesn't add a new tax to the existing residents and businesses within the city, and it will remove potential costs that would otherwise be paid out by the city's general fund.



Short-Term Implementation

Given the necessity of phased development and complexity of assembling the support and financing necessary to achieve the Town Center vision, the city will have to focus its efforts on short-, mid-, and long-term timelines.

In the short term, the city can start working toward the larger vision for the Town Center by beginning to work with existing property and business owners to establish a Business Improvement District (BID). That organization will be essential to refine the scope of the redevelopment project and to anticipate future development.

Working collaboratively, the city and the BID can develop programming right now, beginning to create a sense of place and activate the existing underutilized areas in the Focus Area. Portions of parking lots could be cordoned off to make space for a farmers' market or a food truck night—all revolving around a theme of healthy living and local food experiences. The city already does outdoor movies at one of the local parks—similar activities could also take place on some of the existing, underused parking lots in the Focus Area.

Vacancies in some of the existing storefronts could also present opportunities to encourage pop-up or other interim uses. Such uses would require flexible permitting to allow temporary uses like experiential uses, art spaces, or a food truck business that's looking to experiment in a brick-and-mortar location. The TAP recommends that permitting and review for interim uses should be encouraged and streamlined.

The city already has a robust branding system—it should work with the BID to create a complimentary branding and messaging system for the Focus Area and Town Center to promote the programming and improve community use of the site.

Medium-Term Implementation

The TAP recommends forming a working group with the property owners and the community stakeholders to develop specific plan priorities. The group should also determine the scope, cost, and feasibility of the desired amenities, ensuring that the plan is executable. The city should take another, detailed look at housing supply and demand in the city, potentially making the case to develop more than currently zoned 900 residential units. One question to answer, for example, is whether the nearby residential community is more concerned with density or building height. Further financial and economic analysis will also be helpful for determining the financial performance of the developments, including job creation and other economic drivers.

Other crucial work through this medium-term period will include continuing to work with the BID to implement additional on-site community programming and continuing to implement branding and messaging strategies, reviewing and updating as needed to keep it fresh and responsive to community needs.



The work toward developing and approving the Specific Plan will include identifying and adopting measures that can ensure a plan flexible enough to respond to changes in demand. The document should be a living document, generating the right kind of development, at the right time, for the city and the community. The work of creating a framework for development agreements for the Specific Plan can be completed in this timeframe as well. This framework will provide certainty for all parties—property owners and developers, city officials, and the public. This timeframe should also be used to create a streamlined review process and assign dedicated staff to work on Specific Plan implementation once the plan is complete and once the subsequent entitlement processes begin.

The city should also confirm other avenues of public funding, exploring Community Financing Districts (CFDs) and Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts (EIFDs). The city will have to create the necessary public funds for the development of infrastructure and amenities in the Town Center. According to the TAP's assessment, the EIFD is likely to generate a limited amount of revenue, but it can still contribute to the cause.



Long-Term Implementation (Five Years and Beyond)

It will take at least five years to begin implementation of the Specific Plan, but once a new, more detailed vision for the Town Center is complete, the city should start with the prioritization of the Phase 1 site identified by the TAP for the parcels along Golden Springs Road. Those parcels appear to be ripe for future development on this timeframe. The Specific Plan should guide the process of identifying the right scale of development and making sure that the redevelopment is financially viable.

That work will require coordinating with the two property owners on the Phase 1 portion of the development. The potential plaza development on the center of Phase 1 will require decisions about how to achieve a village or community feel for that publicly accessible space.

The hard work of creating the new, more urban street grid, with new east-west connections through the site, should also begin on this slightly longer timeframe. The funding for those new streets could be a prime use for revenue generated by an EIFD or CFD program.

As the Phase 1 site is built, the city and its partners should continue to enhance the programming of gathering spaces. Those initial activities, like farmers' markets or movie nights, can be incorporated into the public gathering spaces created in the new development. Events that prove successful in the parking lots before redevelopment occurs can continue after the new amenities take shape, activating the plaza space and new uses in the Town Center as soon as it opens to the public.

The city can lay the groundwork for success by demonstrating the process in Phase 1 of the Town Center redevelopment. Other property owners will see the program and gain interest—but this is all with the understanding that the Diamond Bar Town Center vision might take decades to realize in full.

CONCLUSION

It won't be easy or quick, but the potential for a Town Center located adjacent to the intersections of Golden Springs Drive and Diamond Bar Boulevard is immense.

The TAP's vision for the Town Center would accommodate automobiles while prioritizing pedestrians and creating space for new residents and businesses. Public spaces would be built into the topography of the site and its mix of uses. The view from this location would be expanded across the San Gabriel Valley, to the mountains to the north. The Town Center would generate tax revenue while also providing options for healthy activities. The food, it goes without saying, will be fantastic. The Town Center would be a win for the entire community.

There are several large obstacles to overcome on the way to this vision. The city must work collaboratively with local stakeholders, providing flexibility while keeping its eyes on the prize as years pass, as redevelopment opportunities

arise, and as the market changes. Some motorists and nearby homeowners will push back against the proposed changes, but the city has a compelling case to be made about how a new Town Center can benefit everyone in the city.

The area is currently dominated by automobiles and parking—trapping the potential for the local retail and commercial uses to generate community activity and excitement behind a wall of steel. Given the current state of the area, incremental improvements will be so obvious that small steps toward the final goal will ensure the success of bigger steps to be taken later.

Establishing a Business Improvement District and launching a Specific Plan process will be an early indication of the community's, and the city's, commitment to this vision. That work can begin now.



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Special Thanks

The TAP is thankful for the commitment and participation of stakeholders. The following is a list of individuals who were interviewed or provided valuable information and perspective during the TAP process:

Diamond Bar City Council

Nancy A. Lyons, Mayor

Ruth M. Low, Mayor Pro-Tem

Andrew Chou, Council Member

Stan Liu, Council, Council Member

Steve Tye, Council Member

Diamond Bar Planning Commission

William Rawlings, Chair

Mahendra Garg, Vice Chair

Naila Barlas, Commissioner

Kenneth Mok, Commissioner

Raymond Wolfe, Commissioner

Diamond Bar City Staff

Daniel Fox, City Manager

Greg Gubman, AICP, Community Development Director

Community Stakeholders

Mark St. Amant, Diamond Bar General Plan Advisory Committee, Chair

Michael Rotondi, Rotondi/Greiman Trust, Owner, Lot 4

Lee Paulson, Responsible Land Use, Community Advocate

Paul Deibel, Resident, Affordable Housing Advocate

Larry M. Black, Century 21 Care, Real Estate Broker

ABOUT THE PANEL



Andrew Fogg, Panel Chair
Partner, Cox, Castle & Nicholson LLP

Andrew Fogg is a Partner at the law firm Cox, Castle & Nicholson LLP where he serves as the Co-Team Leader of the firm's Land Use and Natural Resources Team. Andrew has extensive experience in the land use entitlement process and related areas, including all aspects of planning, zoning, and environmental review, in cities and counties throughout California. Andrew has been actively involved in a myriad of project types, including hospital and healthcare facilities, master planned communities, urban infill mixed use projects, hospitality projects, residential and commercial condominium developments, commercial centers, and industrial developments. As part of his entitlement practice, Andrew has advised clients on all aspects of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), including the use of various CEQA exemptions and ensuring the adequacy of project specific Environmental Impact Reports and Mitigated Negative Declarations. In addition to representing clients in the entitlement process, Andrew has defended projects that have been challenged under CEQA and other California planning and zoning laws in both state and federal courts.



Ashley Atkinson, AICP
Senior Manager, Housing + Community Investment
Department at City of Los Angeles

Known as a problem solver in local government, Ashley Atkinson was recently tapped to implement the City of Los Angeles' programs to house Angelenos with disabilities. She also serves as president of the American Planning Association's California Chapter for 2021-2022, advancing the planning practice for more than 5,000 members statewide. Previously, she led Los Angeles City Planning's Performance Management Unit, where she developed metrics for the nation's largest planning department based on data analysis and stakeholder input. During Mayor Eric Garcetti's first term, she served as his Senior Planning & Development Manager, working to achieve priority outcomes including California's broadest seismic retrofit program and innovative approaches to housing construction. She received her master's degree in Public Administration and Planning from USC's Price School of Public Policy, where she has served as an adjunct instructor since 2018.



Paul Herrmann, P.E.
Associate, Fehr & Peers

Paul Herrmann is a Licensed Traffic Engineer in the State of California and Transportation Planner with ten years of experience at Fehr & Peers. Paul received his bachelors degree in Civil Engineering from Cal Poly Pomona. Paul has led long range transportation projects such as specific plans and general plans and short term design projects such as bikeway design and traffic signal design. Paul is a CEQA expert focusing in transportation impacts related to Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) and Travel Demand Management (TDM) mitigation strategies.



Enrique Mutis
Harvard Graduate School of Design

Born and raised in Bogotá, Colombia, Enrique Mutis brings over 10 years of local and international experience in residential, cultural, healthcare, and educational architecture. As cities continue to evolve, Enrique is committed to working with local communities to meet the growing need for density, while consistently striving to maintain the cultural fabric and ethnic values of each individual neighborhood. Enrique sits on the board of CicLAvia and the Los Angeles Leadership Academy, and he is also an active member of Urban Plan and the Technical Assistance Panel in ULI. Enrique is pursuing a Masters of Architecture in Urban Design at the Harvard Graduate School of Design.



Steve Nelson

Senior Vice President, C.W. Driver

As Senior Vice President of Estimating & Preconstruction for C.W. Driver Companies, Steve brings nearly 40 years of experience in the Orange County and Los Angeles construction markets. Steve's diverse experience includes projects in the commercial office, retail, hospitality, and residential market sectors. He is a firm believer that a successful project is a result of clear communication, early trade involvement, cost escalation management, knowledge of the building codes and occupancy type, and awareness of current and future construction market trends.



Matt Romero

Senior Associate, Studio-MLA

Matt Romero is a landscape designer inspired by creating transformative public places for community benefit. Matt embraces the potential for landscape architecture to offer environmental justice solutions while working with the community's needs. He is interested in providing sustainable, impactful environments through socially and ecologically sensitive, community-driven design. Matt possesses attention to creative detail and a collaborative ethos that he brings to a variety of projects at Studio-MLA – from master planning, open space and parks to mixed use residential and corporate campuses. Matt is the board chair of From Lot to Spot, a local nonprofit that provides disadvantaged communities with healthy public spaces that are the direct result of effective community engagement.



Roger Sanchez
Founding Partner, Uncomn Projects

Roger Sanchez is the Founding Partner of Uncomn Projects (pronounced “Uncommon Projects”), a branding, integrated marketing, and consulting firm focused on multifamily and commercial real estate projects. Roger manages the creative, marketing, and advertising teams, and oversees the business strategy. Clients include prominent developers, private equity firms, and property managers across the US.



Jennifer Pehr
Urban Systems Leader, ERAco

An urban planner and designer by training and practice, Jennifer is responsible for the design and implementation of strategic plans with respect to ERA’s Urban Systems group. This includes the consideration of community outreach and engagement strategies, research initiatives, and analyses for projects related to cities, infrastructure, and population health. Through her work, Jennifer seeks to integrate value through all stages of the design process, in particular, visioning, master planning and design, community engagement, and evaluation, through the analysis of urban strategy, spatial configurations, and urban frameworks. Based in New York City for almost 20 years, Jennifer has cultivated a diverse experience in project typologies, geographic locations, and unique experiences to conceptualizing, designing, and realizing projects in the built environment. She is unafraid to ask bold questions that challenge conventional ways of looking at the world.



Roland Wiley.
Owner, RAW International

Mr. Wiley has over 38 years of experience in urban design, project design, and technical coordination. He has a wealth of transit design and construction experience. His history of completed transit projects ranges from the Union Station Intermodal Transit Facility (1996), the Rosa Parks / Willowbrook Metro Station TOD Master Plan (2011), to the Exposition Phase 2 Light Rail Transit Line (2016).

Mr. Wiley currently leads his firm's role as the station architect for Los Angeles' most impactful transit projects including the Westside Extension (Subway to the Sea) and the Metro Integrated Station Design Solutions project as Principal Architect.

Mr. Wiley considers himself an urban visionary. His years of experience have afforded him the opportunity to plan, design and build urban projects ranging from a downtown high-rise commercial development to transit oriented development master plans. Over the course of his professional development Mr. Wiley has developed a passion for the sustainable revitalization of underserved urban communities. Projects under his direction include the Crenshaw-LAX Transit Study which identified the significant potential for revitalization by using regional transit investment as a catalyst for the economic development of the community.



Derek Wyatt
Managing Director, RCLCO

Derek Wyatt is a Managing Director based in RCLCO's Los Angeles office. Since joining the firm in 2010, Derek has worked closely with RCLCO's clients in the public and private sectors to provide strategic recommendations in the real estate sector. Derek's experience as a project manager at RCLCO stretches across all of the firm's practice groups, with an emphasis on market feasibility analyses, financial analyses, as well as strategy development and implementation for large-scale land developments and urban, infill projects.

Derek played a pivotal role in establishing RCLCO's Institutional Advisory Group and has been essential in developing internal methodologies and models. His work with the firm's institutional clients includes analyses of portfolios and allocations, the development of long-term pacing plans, and the selection of investments and managers.

Derek currently focuses on work in RCLCO's Urban Real Estate and Community and Resort Advisory Groups. Through his experience in these groups, Derek has analyzed every development typology in the marketplace and provides a studied understanding of the market and financial dynamics driving development potential for projects, ranging from urban mixed-use developments to suburban master-planned communities.

Derek holds a Bachelor of Arts in Economics from the University of California, Berkeley.



Jennifer Smith, AIA
Architect, Hart Howerton

Jennifer is licensed architect in the State of California and received her architectural degree from the University of California, Berkeley. She is a Project Manager at Hart Howerton and her contribution of skills spans from early master planning, design and construction. Jennifer has led a variety of projects that range in scale, type, and complexity including master planning of city-scale developments, retail, mixed-use, hospitality, and residential. With over 20 years of experience, Jennifer has been responsible for designing and managing projects focused on the creation of a high-quality public realm, with an attention to enduring and enriching communities that enhance the built environment. Some of Jennifer's projects include the design and implementation of an urban mixed-use core at Hollywood Park in Inglewood, California; the new downtown retail district at Sacramento Railyards in Sacramento, California; the renovation and expansion of Harvard Law School in Cambridge, Massachusetts; and early master planning for the new Town Center at Treasure Island in San Francisco, California.



John Zimmerman
Founder & Principal, Zimmerman Group

Mr. John Zimmerman has been providing financial consulting services to land developers and home builders for over 15 years. He has been involved in the evaluation of hundreds of land development projects and successfully assisted Clients in a wide range of real estate financing matters, some of which include: formation of land secured public financing districts, issuance of land secured debt, negotiation of development impact fee credits, securing reimbursement agreements, review of cost to complete analyses, negotiating Development Agreement and Conditions of Approval, preparation of Fiscal Impact Reports, public financing district restructuring, bond refundings, special tax prepayments, property tax disclosure, cashflow analysis, funding of public municipal services, and school facilities mitigation. Mr. Zimmerman has assisted clients in the sale and/or structuring of over \$1 billion in public financing debt. He has been successful in maximizing and accelerating CFD bond issues by developing strategies that minimize public agency risk and maximize bond proceeds.



John Paul Wardy

Chief Executive Officer and Founder CenterCal

Jean Paul Wardy began his career in real estate while attending the University of Southern California. Mr. Wardy joined the Alexander Haagen Company in 1990, and by 1993 had been promoted to Vice President, Acquisitions. From 1993 through 1998, Mr. Wardy was the executive primarily responsible for the successful acquisition of over 20 shopping centers.

In 1998, Mr. Wardy co-founded CenterOak Properties with Fred Bruning, which became CenterCal Properties in 2004. Since that time, Mr. Wardy has committed his efforts toward creating successful retail driven projects that both enhance and elevate the communities they serve.

In the pursuit of his real estate career, Mr. Wardy built upon the solid foundation of his family's successful retail background in the Amen Wardy Stores and Amen Wardy Home Stores. Mr. Wardy is a member of the International Council of Shopping Centers and the Urban Land Institute, and is a devoted husband and father.



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